

Argument in favor of the adoption of State Question No. 38, Initiative Petition No. 67. The full title and text of the measure reads:

A Bill Entitled: "An Act Levying upon the Property of Certain Public Service Corporations, an Annual Tax for the Maintenance of the Common Schools of this State, Providing for the Collection and Apportionment Thereof, as Provided in Section 12a, Article 10, of the State Constitution."
Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oklahoma:

Section 1. For the purpose of maintaining the common schools of this State for the fiscal year beginning July 1st next following the adoption of this Act, and for each fiscal year thereafter an annual tax is hereby levied upon the property of every railroad company, pipe line company, telegraph company, and upon the property of every public service corporation which is located in more than one county in this state; such tax to be equal (as near as may be) to the average rate of tax levied upon other property in this state for like purposes.

For the purpose of determining the rate of tax to be applied to the property coming under the provisions of this Act, for maintaining common schools for any tax year, it is hereby made the duty of the County Clerk of each county in this State to furnish the State Auditor, in writing, over his signature and seal, not later than October 1st, each year, a statement showing the maintenance for general purposes of the common schools in his county for such year, and the State Auditor shall add together the amount of such maintenance for general purposes for each county, and shall divide the result by the total number of school districts in this State, and the quotient shall be held and construed to be the average rate of tax levied upon property for like purposes.

One of the black spots upon Oklahoma history is the repudiation of the fundamental principle by the Oklahoma Legislature. This measure by Initiative, has been brought before the voters of the State for a final verdict. A "yes" vote upon this measure is a vote to compel respect for the provisions of the State Constitution, and a vote to uphold the principle of the people of Oklahoma, regularly and constitutionally expressed.

Prepared and submitted upon behalf of the citizens of Oklahoma by the Oklahoma Educational Association, and who are willing to "acquiesce in the decision of the majority," repeatedly expressed.

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Section 2. All taxes collected under the provision of this Act shall be collected, he paid into the State Treasury to the credit of the common school fund, and the same shall be apportioned and distributed in like time and manner as other common school funds of the State.

Section 3. Property coming under the provisions of this Act shall not be liable for the maintenance or general purpose tax levied by any school district; but such property shall be subject to taxation for all other purposes, and the school district levy for "interest and sinking fund," the same as before the adoption of this Act.

No one has even advanced a claim that the above measure is not properly drawn to make effective the will of the people of Oklahoma as expressed in Section 12a, Article 10 of the State Constitution, ratified by the people of Oklahoma August 5, 1913.

The enemies of Section 12a will fight this measure upon the ground that Section 12a should not be vitalized. To advance such an argument is to challenge the authority and NOT the majority should rule. Section 12a has been before the people in three elections. In the general election in 1913 this proposition was defeated by a majority of the people. The legislature had ordered it submitted to the people for their approval or rejection.

When section 12a was adopted by the people, it was a measure which realized the full significance of the measure. Like many other questions submitted to an uninformed public, it was permitted to become a mere "yes" or "no" vote. Hundreds of school districts losing from 10 to 25 per cent of their school taxes unknowingly voted this measure upon themselves.

The measure was submitted at a special election in August, 1913, receiving 63,330 "yes" votes to 39,294 "no" votes. When the same became a part of the Constitution of Oklahoma, the Supreme Court held that the section was not self-executing, but required vitalizing legislation.

money collected from the public, and Attorney General Frost has well said in referring to Section 12a: "Surely no one will deny that the people may provide in the Constitution that the part of the tax which is to be levied upon the property of the people, shall be so distributed that all may have the benefit of a just proportion. To deny that the people may accomplish the purpose of the measure by such an amendment, and which was sincerely believed is clearly expressed, is to deny the sovereignty of the people."

The citizens of every school district in Oklahoma contribute to the funds which pay public service corporations taxes for maintaining common schools, and every school district has the same right to use and benefit of the same that they have to share in the interest collected upon the common school fund or the rentals collected upon school lands (Sections 16 and 36).

It is impossible to understand the position of the legislature in this particular school district in which the land is located, wouldn't it cause a riot?

The platform upon which our present Governor made his successful campaign for re-election was "I believe that when a constitutional amendment or an initiative question has been duly submitted and ratified by the people of Oklahoma, the legislature is bound to carry out the will of the people."

Thomas Jefferson said: "Absolute assent to the decisions of the majority is the fundamental principle of republicanism." One of the black spots upon Oklahoma history is the repudiation of the fundamental principle by the Oklahoma Legislature. This measure by Initiative, has been brought before the voters of the State for a final verdict. A "yes" vote upon this measure is a vote to compel respect for the provisions of the State Constitution, and a vote to uphold the principle of the people of Oklahoma, regularly and constitutionally expressed.

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tem instead of building it up. Knowledge that it would be an injury with no means of reparation left under the constitution or the law, and knowing that thousands of children all over the state would be thus left without means to be educated, refused to violate "12a." Who can say that the legislature did not act wisely in refraining from inflicting such injury?

Senator Russell has with great precision presented this matter. At one time he introduced a bill that would give him 10 per cent commission out of the proceeds of districts benefited. Again, he took contracts from citizens to build a hotel for the purpose of the 10 per cent of what they would receive. So far as known he still holds these contracts. He admitted that if the measure went through he would realize something like \$100,000 commission. Under such conditions he cannot claim to be without personal interest or bias in the final outcome.

The criticism of the legislature during the present session, without a tinge of personal interest. What ever admiration one may have for Senator Russell, one cannot but feel that his vision has been clouded. He is a victim of the "yes" vote. Surely it cannot be true that he would believe that all the legislative bodies of the past who have refused to follow his demands have been fools. He is a victim of the "yes" vote.

Senator Russell in his argument for this measure complains that the legislature have not acted in the future, however, of the irreparable injury that such actions would have caused. This bill will take from the state—injury that was unknown and unthought of when "Section 12a" was adopted. The legislature could well afford to pass such grave reparation to the people who now must act instead of the legislature. The legislature well understood this and in passing the question to the people, violated no fundamental principle of the constitution.

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There is no basis of representation or fixed time of meeting for said organization, and only a few attend its called meetings. In the facts herein given you will see the sinister purpose of the organization.

Members Deceived.
The Fraternal Congress of Oklahoma gave a banquet to the members of the legislature in the Lee Hotel for the purpose of "boosting" a certain proposed law and the said proposed amendment to our Constitution. Of course the members of the legislature, belonging to the several fraternal societies concerned, knew nothing about the meeting or its purposes. They contributed the money which the head of the banquet used as an expense of the banquet, contrary to the principle, "Taxation without representation is tyranny." Members of the legislature evidently believe that the fraternal Congress of Oklahoma represented the members of the several societies concerned. In this they were deceived.

The legislature merely submitted the proposed amendment to the people for their ratification or rejection. The members of the legislature who voted for the proposed amendment to the people will vote against the same.

Object to Convert Into Old Line Companies.
The law of this state recognizes two lines or types of policies, one for profit and the other for mutual protection. Sec. 3 of Art. 13 of our Constitution exempts insurance companies from taxation for like purposes, and insuring only their own members (fraternal societies), and all of which the interest of each policyholder is in the common fund. Mutual, consolidated, union-granted and small community schools by giving them the same advantages as other schools, the legislature would not be compelled to move to the cities.

There are now old line properties in Oklahoma valued at about \$500,000,000, paying only a small premium tax. This was fixed years ago when the question of the old line was put before the people. The old line was put before the people in 1913, and the people voted for it. The old line was put before the people in 1913, and the people voted for it.

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other prominent members of the societies affected, and the members generally when they understand the facts and see the viciousness of the proposed amendment will vote NO.

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Initiative Petition No. 72.
This proposed amendment provides that: "For the purpose of maintaining the common schools of this State, the State Auditor shall, each year, levy on an ad valorem basis, a tax not less than six mills and not more than ten mills upon the property of every citizen within the State not exempt from taxation as public, church, charity or fraternal property."

The assessed value of property actually taxed ad valorem for the current year is \$1,664,465. Six mills (the minimum) applied to this would produce \$9,986,892.47.

The serious and insurmountable objection to this amendment is to be found in the first five words of the second paragraph. "Until otherwise provided by law." This money, raised by uniform tax upon all taxable property, is to be "apportioned and distributed" upon the common school funds, "until otherwise provided by law"—that is, until the legislature meets. Under this amendment the Legislature will have complete control over the use of this money for any purpose which they may deem "helpful to the common schools."

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